



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE WEST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

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Project Number:	3016993
Address:	527 Fairview Ave N
Applicant:	David Murphy, Murphy Varey for Even Hotels + Staybridge Suites
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday, September 03, 2014
Board Members Present:	Peter Krech, Substitute Christine Harrington Boyd Pickrell (Chair)
Board Members Absent:	Mindy Black Katherine Idziorek Janet Stephenson
DPD Staff Present:	Beth Hartwick

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### SITE & VICINITY

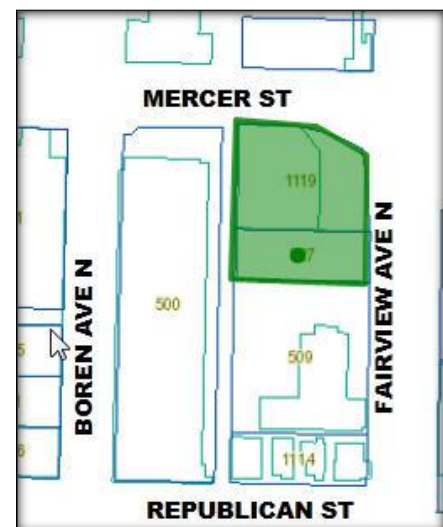
**Site Zone:** SM 160/85-240

**Nearby Zones:** (North) SM 85/65-160  
(South) SM 85/65-160  
(East) SM-85 & SM 85/65-160  
(West) SM 85/65-160

**Lot Area:** 27,357 sq. ft.

**Current Development:** A two-story warehouse and a one-story warehouse.

**Access:** The site has access from curb cuts on both Fairview Ave N and Mercer St. An alley abuts the west property line.



**Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:**

The South Lake Union neighborhood has been in rapid transition and many of the older one, two and three story residential, commercial and warehouse structures have or are being replaced by larger development. The site directly to the south is in permit review for a 12-story office building. Across the newly reconfigured Mercer St., three blocks are under reviewed that will provide a mix of office, retail and residential space. Across Fairview Ave N is a 5-story medical/lab building, completed in 2008. West of the alley is a 5-story office building constructed in 2009. The “Ford Assembly Plant” which is a historic landmark is northeast of the site and the I-5 ramps.

Recreational opportunities include Lake Union two blocks to the north and Cascade Playground two block to the southeast.

Mercer St. is a very busy arterial that handles traffic getting on and off I-5. Fairview Ave N is also a busy vehicular arterial. The area offers frequent transit service, including the South Lake Union Streetcar two blocks to the west and several nearby bus routes.

**Environmentally Critical Areas:** None

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The proposal is for a 9-story 170,885 sq. ft. hotel with approx. 235 guest rooms. Parking for 90 vehicles would be provided below grade. Existing structures are to be demolished.

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The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3016993) at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing    Public Resource Center**

**Address:** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000

P.O. Box 34019

Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:**    [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

**DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

The applicant presented three options all of which situated the main massing close to the two street property lines, and had an alley facing raised courtyard. The preferred option was a “C” shaped structure with a generous setback from the south property line. The structure will house two hotels, one of which would include a typical hotel function and the other geared to extended stay use, with separate pedestrian entries on Mercer St and Fairview Ave N.

The applicant presented a through block pedestrian connection from Fairview Ave N to the alley near the south lot line. Stairs at the back of the site would lead down to the alley.

The project team has been working with DPD and SDOT in requesting a curb cut to allow vehicle access off of Fairview Ave. N. The code requires alley access but the DPD Director in consultation with SDOT may permit access from the street. At the time of the EDG meeting DPD was inclined to grant a one way curb cut for entry to the site off of Fairview Ave N. near the south property line. Options 2 and 3 showed access via the curb cut.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments were offered at the EDG meeting.

#### **PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

#### **FINAL EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE September 3, 2014**

1. **Massing:** The Board noted that given the location of the site, the building should make a strong architectural gateway statement. The site can also be looked at as a 'bookend' to development along Fairview Ave N to the south and along Mercer Ave to the west. The Board expressed their concern that the proposed massing concepts were too muted to achieve a significant gateway statement. The Board offered the following additional guidance related to massing: (CS2.A.2, CS2.C.1, CS2.I.iii, CS3.B.1)
  - a. Study and respond to the existing conditions of the surrounding buildings, especially 500 Boren to the west. (CS3.A.3, DC2.C.3)
  - b. Design the corner joining the two wings to be dynamic. (See example #2 shown on page 6 of the EDG packet.) (CS2.C.1)
  - c. Avoid a patchwork approach to the massing, the design should not look like infill but should be well integrated into the current massing. (CS3.A.3)
  - d. Consider designing the massing to indicate the project is two different hotels using the corner as a transition. (DC1.A.1)
  - e. Consider the stepping of the roof line as shown in Option 2. (DC2.B.1)
2. **Architectural Design:** The Board stated the design should be unique and specifically related to the SLU neighborhood. The Board gave guidance that the design of the structure should consider the following; a strong roof line, the connection of the two wings, the skew of the site, and the datum lines of the existing structures along Mercer St. (CS2.B.1, CS2.I.iii)
  - a. Provide a bolder design statement. (CS2.C.I.iii, CS3.B.1)

- b. The corner location is very important and will have great views to the lake; use this opportunity to design a strong corner. (CS2.C.1)
  - c. Emphasize the verticality of the building as other recent buildings have. (CS3.A.3)
  - d. The interior seems to be well thought out with a strong quality concept; this same attention needs to be applied to the exterior. (DC2.D.1 & 2)
  - e. Consider what the alley façade will look like. Design the alley façade and functions to respond to existing and future conditions. (DC2.B.1)
- 3. **Materials:** The Board noted that the recent buildings along the south side of Mercer St provide their relief and interest through the use of materials. The proposed concepts appear to be too plain for this gateway location. The Board strongly encouraged the use of quality materials that relate to the recently built structures along Mercer St. and Fairview Ave N. (DC4.A.1, DC2.C.3)
  - a. Use quality exterior materials, with refined detailing. (DC4.A.1)
  - b. Study and respond to the existing conditions of the surrounding buildings, especially 500 Boren to the west. (DC2.C.3)
  - c. Design the scale of the signage to work with moving vehicles. (DC4.B)
- 4. **Entries and Street-level Interaction:** The Board encouraged treating the sloping site and its elevation change as an opportunity, not a constraint. (CS1.C.1&2, PL3.A.1, PL3.C.1&2)
  - a. Design the hotel entries to relate to the pedestrian flow and crosswalks across Mercer St. and Fairview Ave N. as well as the neighboring buildings. (PL1.B.1, PL2.A.1)
  - b. Consider locating a main entry at the corner to emphasize and activate the corner. (CS2.C.1, PL3.A.1)
  - c. Provide more visible entries. PL2.B.3, PL3.A.1)
  - d. The street facing ground floor should provide more transparency. (PL2.B.3, PL3.C.2)
- 5. **Public Realm:** The Board felt that the corner is important as a pedestrian experience and needs to be considered and addressed in the project design accordingly. (CS2.B.2, PL1.B.1, PL1.B3, PL1.I.ii)
  - a. Consider a raised platform/entry at the corner that the public can access for views. (CS1.C.2, PL1.B.3, PL3.C.1)
  - b. Provide weather protection for pedestrians waiting for the light crossing at the corner. (PL2.C.1&3)
  - c. The proposed landscaping buffer along the building could be successful but at the corner it pushes people away from the structure. Locate landscaping along the curb where it does not compete with pedestrian circulation and open up the building corner for pedestrian access and uses. ((PL2.C.3)
- 6. **Curb Cut and Pedestrian Connection:** The Board was mixed in their feedback towards the Fairview Ave N curb cut. They were also concerned about security of the proposed pedestrian connection to the alley. They gave the following guidance:

- a. Provide landscaping but also keep sight lines open for safety. (DC1.C.2)
- b. Use higher quality materials and consider a rolled curb to provide smooth access to the entry. (DC4.B.2)
- c. If possible, provide a port-cohere like configuration at the alley and eliminate the pedestrian connection to the alley. (DC1.C.2)

## DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

### CONTEXT & SITE

**CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.**

#### **CS1-C Topography**

**CS1-C-1. Land Form:** Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

**CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes:** Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

#### **CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood**

**CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence:** Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

#### **CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces**

**CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics:** Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

**CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

**CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space:** Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

#### **CS2-C Relationship to the Block**

**CS2-C-1. Corner Sites:** Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

#### ***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

#### **CS2-I Responding to Site Characteristics**

**CS2-I-i. Views:** Encourage provision of “outlooks and overlooks” for the public to view the lake and cityscapes. Examples include provision of public plazas and/or other public

open spaces and changing the form or facade setbacks of the building to enhance opportunities for views.

**CS2-I-iii. Gateways:** Reinforce community gateways through the use of architectural elements, streetscape features, landscaping and/or signage. Gateways can be defined through landscaping, artwork, and references to the history of the location that create a sense of place. Gateways are transition locations, places that mark entry or departure points to a neighborhood for automobiles and pedestrians. They are sites that create opportunities for identification, a physical marker for the community to notice they are entering a special place. Methods to establish gateways should consider the site's characteristics such as topography, views or surrounding building patterns. Elements could include building out to meet the corner where appropriate, or tools such as:

- a. setbacks to allow for pedestrian friendly spaces;
- b. signage;
- c. landscaping;
- d. artwork;
- e. facade treatments.

**CS2-II Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility**

**CS2-II-i. Corridor Experience:** Address both the pedestrian and auto experience through building placement, scale and details with specific attention to regional transportation corridors such as Mercer, Aurora, Fairview and Westlake. These locations, pending changes in traffic patterns, may evolve with transportation improvements.

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods:** In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

**CS3-B Local History and Culture**

**CS3-B-1. Placemaking:** Explore the history of the site and neighborhood as a potential placemaking opportunity. Look for historical and cultural significance, using neighborhood groups and archives as resources.

**PUBLIC LIFE**

**PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.**

**PL1-A Network of Open Spaces**

**PL1-A-1. Enhancing Open Space:** Design the building and open spaces to positively contribute to a broader network of open spaces throughout the neighborhood.

**PL1-B Walkways and Connections**

**PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

**PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities:** Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

**PL1-I Human Activity**

**PL1-I-i. Open Connections:** Keep neighborhood connections open, and discourage closed campuses.

**PL1-I-ii. Pedestrian Network:** Reinforce pedestrian connections both within the neighborhood and to other adjacent neighborhoods. Transportation infrastructure should be designed with adjacent sidewalks, as development occurs to enhance pedestrian connectivity.

**PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.**

**PL2-A Accessibility**

**PL2-A-1. Access for All:** Provide access for people of all abilities in a manner that is fully integrated into the project design. Design entries and other primary access points such that all visitors can be greeted and welcomed through the front door.

**PL2-A-2. Access Challenges:** Add features to assist pedestrians in navigating sloped sites, long blocks, or other challenges.

**PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street:** Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

**PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety:** Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency:** Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

**PL2-C Weather Protection**

**PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage:** Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

**PL2-C-2. Design Integration:** Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

**PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces:** Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

**PL2-D Wayfinding**

**PL2-D-1. Design as Wayfinding:** Use design features as a means of wayfinding wherever possible.

***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

**PL2-I Streetscape Compatibility**

**PL2-I-i. Street Level Uses:** Encourage provision of spaces for street level uses that vary in size, width, and depth. Encourage the use of awnings and weather protection along street fronts to enhance the pedestrian environment.

**PL1-I-ii. Streetscape Amenities:** Provide pedestrian-friendly streetscape amenities

- a. tree grates;
- b. benches;
- c. lighting.

**PL1-I-iii. Sidewalk Retail:** Where appropriate, configure retail space so that it can spill-out onto the sidewalk (retaining six feet for pedestrian movement, where the sidewalk is sufficiently wide).

## **PL2-II Personal Safety and Security**

**PL2-II-i. All-Day Activity:** Enhance public safety throughout the neighborhood to foster 18- hour public activity. Methods to consider are:

- a. enhanced pedestrian and street lighting;
- b. well-designed public spaces that are defensively designed with clear sight lines and opportunities for eyes on the street.

## **PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

### **PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-1. Design Objectives:** Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

**PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements:** Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

### **PL3-C Retail Edges**

**PL3-C-1. Porous Edge:** Engage passersby with opportunities to interact visually with the building interior using glazing and transparency. Create multiple entries where possible and make a physical and visual connection between people on the sidewalk and retail activities in the building.

**PL3-C-2. Visibility:** Maximize visibility into the building interior and merchandise displays. Consider fully operational glazed wall-sized doors that can be completely opened to the street, increased height in lobbies, and/or special lighting for displays.

## **South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:**

### **PL3-I Streetscape Compatibility**

**PL3-I-i. Retail Location:** Where appropriate, consider a reduction in the required amount of commercial and retail space at the ground level, such as in transition zones between commercial and residential areas. Place retail in areas that are conducive to the use and will be successful.

### **PL3-II Human Activity**

**PL3-II-i. Public/Private Transition:** Create graceful transitions at the streetscape level between the public and private uses.



**PL3-II-ii. Active Facades:** Design facades to encourage activity to spill out from business onto the sidewalk, and vice-versa.

**PL3-II-iii. Coordinate Retail/Pedestrian Activity:** Reinforce retail concentrations with compatible spaces that encourage pedestrian activity.

**PL3-II-iv. Activity Clusters:** Create businesses and community activity clusters through colocation of retail and pedestrian uses as well as other high pedestrian traffic opportunities.

### **PL3-III Transition Between Residence and Street**

**PL3-III-i. Residential Entries:** Consider designing the entries of residential buildings to enhance the character of the streetscape through the use of small gardens, stoops and other elements to create a transition between the public and private areas. Consider design options to accommodate various residential uses, i.e., townhouse, live-work, apartment and senior-assisted housing.

## **DESIGN CONCEPT**

### **DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.**

#### **DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses**

**DC1-A-1. Visibility:** Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

**DC1-A-2. Gathering Places:** Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

**DC1-A-4. Views and Connections:** Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

#### **DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation**

**DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design:** Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

#### **DC1-C Parking and Service Uses**

**DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts:** Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

**DC1-C-4. Service Uses:** Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

### **DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.**

#### **DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

**DC2-B-1. Façade Composition:** Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

#### **DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features**

**DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest:** Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the

façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

**DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings:** Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

#### **DC2-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

**DC2-D-2. Texture:** Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

#### ***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

##### **DC2-I Architectural Concept and Consistency**

**DC2-I-i. Roofscape Design:** Design the “fifth elevation” — the roofscape — in addition to the streetscape. As this area topographically is a valley, the roofs may be viewed from locations outside the neighborhood such as the freeway and Space Needle. Therefore, views from outside the area as well as from within the neighborhood should be considered, and roof-top elements should be organized to minimize view impacts from the freeway and elevated areas.

#### **DC3 Open Space Concept: Integrate open space design with the building design so that they complement each other.**

#### ***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

##### **DC3-A Building-Open Space Relationship**

**DC3-A-1. Interior/Exterior Fit:** Develop an open space concept in conjunction with the architectural concept to ensure that interior and exterior spaces relate well to each other and support the functions of the development.

##### **DC3-B Open Space Uses and Activities**

**DC3-B-1. Meeting User Needs:** Plan the size, uses, activities, and features of each open space to meet the needs of expected users, ensuring each space has a purpose and function.

**DC3-B-2. Matching Uses to Conditions:** Respond to changing environmental conditions such as seasonal and daily light and weather shifts through open space design and/or programming of open space activities.

**DC3-B-3. Connections to Other Open Space:** Site and design project-related open spaces to connect with, or enhance, the uses and activities of other nearby public open space where appropriate.

**DC3-B-4. Multifamily Open Space:** Design common and private open spaces in multifamily projects for use by all residents to encourage physical activity and social interaction.

#### ***South Lake Union Supplemental Guidance:***

##### **DC3-II Landscaping To Enhance The Building and/or Site**

**DC3-II-i. Integrated Artwork:** Consider integrating artwork into publicly accessible areas of a building and landscape that evokes a sense of place related to the previous uses of the area. Neighborhood themes may include service industries such as laundries, auto row, floral businesses, photography district, arts district, maritime, etc.

**DC3-III Landscape Design To Address Special Site Conditions**

**DC3-III-i. View Orientation:** Landscaping should be designed to take advantage of views to waterfront and downtown Seattle.

**DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.**

**DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

**DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials:** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

**DC4-B Signage**

**DC4-B-1. Scale and Character:** Add interest to the streetscape with exterior signs and attachments that are appropriate in scale and character to the project and its environs.

**DC4-B-2. Coordination with Project Design:** Develop a signage plan within the context of architectural and open space concepts, and coordinate the details with façade design, lighting, and other project features to complement the project as a whole, in addition to the surrounding context.

**DC4-C Lighting**

**DC4-C-1. Functions:** Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

**DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials**

**DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials:** Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

At the Early Design Guidance meeting, no departures were requested.

**BOARD DIRECTION**

At the conclusion of the FINAL EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.